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1913

The Nation's Capital

BY

JAMES BRYCE

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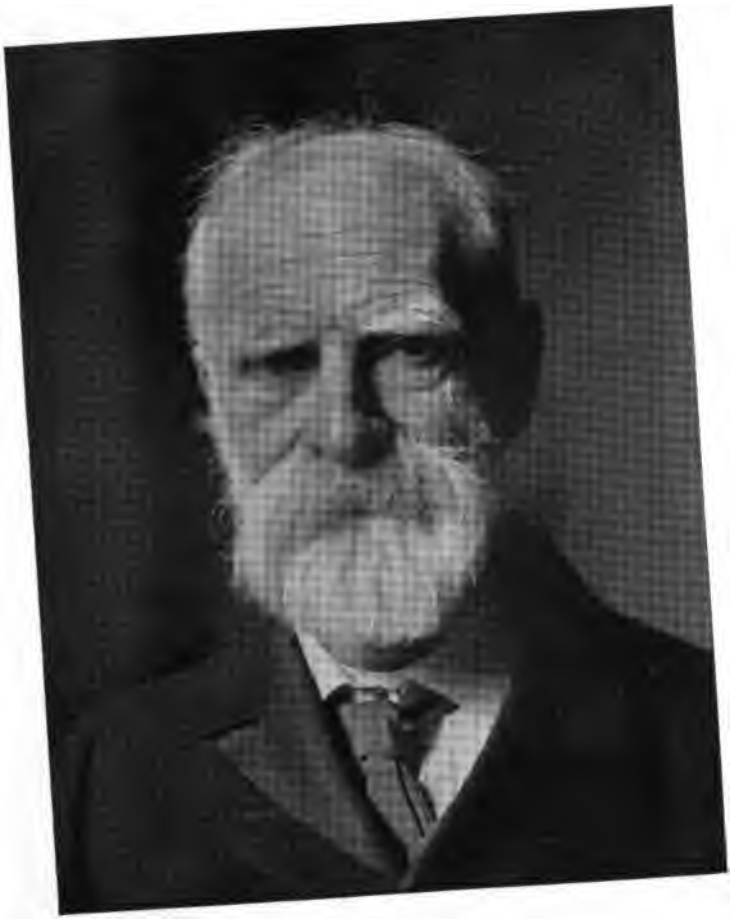

James Bryce

The Nation's Capital

BY

JAMES BRYCE, O. M.

Ambassador to the United States from Great Britain

"All these considerations make one feel how great are the opportunities here offered to you for the further adornment and beautification of this city. Nature has done so much, and you have, yourselves, already done so much that you are called upon to do more. You have such a chance offered to you here for building up a superb capital that it would be almost an act of ingratitude to Providence and to history and to the men who planted the city here if you did not use the advantages that you here enjoy."—*Bryce.*

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WASHINGTON, D. C.
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1913

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WEST FRONT OF TREASURY BUILDING, LOOKING SOUTH

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AN ADDRESS

BY

JAMES BRYCE, O. M.

With an Introductory Address by Mr. Justice Wendell Phillips Stafford, of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia

DELIVERED BEFORE THE COMMITTEE OF ONE HUNDRED ON THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF WASHINGTON AT THE RESIDENCE OF ARTHUR JEFFREY PARSONS, Esq., FEBRUARY 27, 1913

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION OF
AMBASSADOR BRYCE

BY

MR. JUSTICE WENDELL PHILLIPS STAFFORD

"Through the leafy aisles and arches green."—F. W. Faber.

INTRODUCTION

BY

MR. JUSTICE WENDELL PHILLIPS STAFFORD

FELLOW MEMBERS and Guests of the Committee of One Hundred: I am not here to introduce the distinguished speaker, for he is far better known to you than I, but to perform as best I may the task, at once tempting and difficult, of saying a few words by way of preface to the real address of the evening, which we have all come to hear.

After nine years in Washington, I find that my love and admiration for this inspiring city, which I brought with me when I came, have grown deeper and more rich, and that my hopes and wishes for its future have taken larger and more definite outline as I have come to see more clearly what the national capital may one day be. This ideal which has already fashioned itself in my own mind I offer you—not because it is mine, but because I venture to think it may be much the same as that of multitudes of others, and for that reason entitled to attention and respect.

The capital of a nation, though it may lie, as ours does, at the level of the sea, must be in a very true sense, a city that is set on a hill and which cannot be hid. In the nature of things, it draws to itself the eyes not only of its own people, but, if it be the capital of a great nation, as ours is, the eyes

"The yellow harvests of the ripened year."—The Iliad.

of the whole world. If the national domain be vast in extent, belting a continent, embracing different zones, revealing almost every variety of climate and production, with corresponding differences in ways of life and material interests, while at the same time it is one by virtue of a common national spirit and ideal, these facts will only make more impressive, as they certainly will make more necessary, that sentiment of awe and majesty that should surround and invest the seat of governmental power. And if this magnificent domain be the home of nearly half a hundred separate republics, each having its own history and traditions, its own pride of place, subordinate only to those of the nation—not a few of them great enough in individual wealth and power to constitute nations by themselves, and having each its own capital, often beautiful and beloved—then it is all the more essential that this CAPITAL

OF CAPITALS should be no mean city, but worthy in every respect to dominate them all.

The natural sentiment of men in these conditions will tend to make reverend and august the capital of such a country, wherever it may be placed and whatever its separate history may have been. But if in fact it be almost coeval with the Republic itself, if it have been founded by the idolized Father of his Country and bear his name, if it have been for upwards of a century the scene of historic events that have determined the fate of the nation, if it swarm with memories of statesmen and heroes and martyrs, if no one can look upon it without recalling a Titanic struggle for its possession which marshaled men by the million, sprinkled the whole land with blood, and finally gave that land, as Lincoln declared, "a new birth of freedom," then I say it may well be, and surely must become, a Mecca for the feet of patriots as long as the nation shall endure.

Whether we will it so or not, it will become a symbol—a symbol of the great Republic whose visible throne is here. For imagination is not dead and cannot die; and the way of men in all ages is to make symbols, and to cling to them when they are made. It is wisdom, then, to see that the symbol shall be worthy of the love and veneration it expresses, that it may in turn strengthen love and deepen veneration for the reality which it shadows forth. Who shall say that the multitudes that come and go shall not bear away in their bosoms a loftier conception of their country, a juster pride in its history, a firmer faith in its principles, a brighter hope for its future, and a more steadfast purpose to make that future what it ought to be, if they behold here a city which is the outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual life of a free and advancing people? Not a dollar is wasted that is carefully

CANAL, NEAR CABIN JOHN

devoted to that use. When you throw a noble bridge across this river it will be an arm to draw the South and North together. It will not only symbolize reunion, it will serve to make reunion surer and more lasting. For the masses of mankind learn by what they look upon even more than by what they hear or what they read. When they look upon that structure they will feel the impulse of the fraternal love that put it there. Their hearts will tell them what it means. It will need no inscription. They will see North and South clasping hands, in the shadow of Washington's monument and under the fatherly eyes of Lincoln, who loved and would have saved them both.

To serve its highest purpose in this kind, the city, then, must be a work of art—not a loose gathering of various works of art, but one work. How can this be, without observance of the first principle of art—unity? Unity of ideal and unity of design—these we must have, unless we are to be satisfied with a mere collection of separate and inharmonious attempts. That is the idea, that is the truth, that has united us and called this Committee into being. Upon the success of our endeavors, or the endeavors of others inspired by the same principle, the success of the enterprise depends. To have some part, however small, in securing the realization of this ideal is a privilege and will be a joy and pride to us and to those who shall come after.

And now, without longer standing between you and the pleasure you anticipate, I yield the floor to our most welcome guest, whose wide experience in other lands, whose knowledge of this country and appreciation of its institutions, together with his deep and generous interest in Washington itself, so eminently fit him to be our guide in such a field—Mr. Bryce. (Applause.)

"Hill, dale, and shady wood, and sunny plains, and liquid lapse of murmuring streams."—John Milton.

ADDRESS

BY

AMBASSADOR JAMES BRYCE

ROCK CREEK

"The water runs swiftly and there are ripples in the stream."—Bryce.

THE NATION'S CAPITAL

By AMBASSADOR JAMES BRYCE

MR. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: My only excuse for being present and being bold enough to say a few words to you this evening is the desire expressed by a certain number of my friends who belong to your body, and some of whom I see here tonight, that I should give you the impressions of a visitor who, having seen something of the capitals of other countries and having spent six happy and interesting years in Washington, and having grown always more and more interested in your own plans for the adornment of Washington, may possibly be able to look at the matter from a somewhat different angle from that at which most of you have seen it.

It is, I think, impossible for any one who speaks our common language, who is familiar with your institutions and history, who recognizes how much there is in common between us—your nation and mine—to live here without becoming for many purposes—morally and intellectually, and for practically all purposes except, of course, political purposes—a citizen

POTOMAC RIVER, ABOVE CHAIN BRIDGE

"Murmuring over a rocky bed."—Bryce.

of the United States. That does not prevent him, I need hardly say, from remaining a patriotic citizen of his own country. He is exempt from the duty from which, indeed, you are all exempt in the District of Columbia—of casting a vote—and from the other duty of getting on the platform to give his political views to his fellow-countrymen; but in every other respect his residence here gives him all the advantages which you have, in being able to follow the ins and outs of your politics and to appreciate the surprising changes which the whirligig of time brings about.

Taking so keen an interest as I do in the welfare of the United States, I have often felt it somewhat difficult to refrain from offering advice which was not asked for. I trust that I

have always refrained, but in this particular case the observations—I will not call them advice—the observations on the city of Washington and what can be done for it have been asked for, and if you find they are only what you knew before, do not altogether blame me, but lay it to the misjudgment of the too kind friends who have asked me to come upon the platform.

It is impossible to live in Washington and not be struck by some peculiar features and some peculiar beauties which your city possesses. In the first place, its site has a great deal that is admirable and charming. There is rising ground inclosing on all sides a level space, and so making a beautiful amphitheater, between hills that are rich with woods, which in

BELOW GREAT FALLS

"A rocky bed between bold heights."—Bryce.

GREAT FALLS

"No European city has so noble a cataract in its vicinity as the Great Falls of the Potomac, which you will, of course, always preserve."—Bryce.

many places, thanks to the hard ancient rocks of this region, show bold faces and give much more striking effects than we can have in the soft, chalky or sandy hills which surround London. Underneath these hills and running like a silver thread through the middle of the valley is your admirable river. The Potomac has two kinds of beauty—the beauty of the upper stream, murmuring over a rocky bed between bold heights crowned with wood, and the beauty of the wide expanse, spread out like a lake below the city into a vast sheet of silver.

Besides all this, you have behind Washington a charming country. I am sometimes surprised that so few of your residents explore that country on foot. It is only on foot that you

can appreciate its beauties, for some of the most attractive paths are too narrow and tangled for riding. On the north, east, and west sides of Washington, and to some extent on the south, or Virginia, side also, although there the difficulties of locomotion are greater on account of the heavy mud in the roads, the country is singularly charming, quite as beautiful as that which adjoins any of the great capital cities of Europe, except, of course, Constantinople, with its wonderful Bosphorus.

No European city has so noble a cataract in its vicinity as the Great Falls of the Potomac, a magnificent piece of scenery which you will, of course, always preserve.

Vienna has some picturesque country, hills and woods and rocks, within a distance of 25 or 30 miles. London also has very pleasing landscapes of a softer type within about that distance; but I know of no great city in Europe (except Constantinople) that has quite close, in its very environs, such

GORGE BELOW GREAT FALLS

"Between bold heights crowned with trees."—Bryce.

beautiful scenery as has Washington in Rock Creek Park and in many of the woods that stretch along the Potomac on the north and also on the south side, with the broad river in the center and richly wooded slopes descending boldly to it on each side. One may wander day after day in new walks all through these woods to the northwest and west of the city. One need never take the same walk twice, for there is an endless variety of foot-paths, each with its own vistas of woodland beauty.

Nor is Washington less charming in respect of its interior. I know of no city in which the trees seem to be so much a part of the city as Washington. Nothing can be more delightful than the views up and down the wider streets and avenues, especially those that look toward the setting sun or catch some

POTOMAC RIVER

"Spread out like a lake below the city into a vast sheet of silver."—Bryce.

"The beauty of a wide expanse."—Bryce.

glow of the evening light. Look southwestward down New Hampshire avenue, look northwestward up Connecticut avenue, or even westward along modest little N street, which passes the house where I live, and whose vista is closed by the graceful spire of Georgetown University, and you have the most charming sylvan views, and all this is so by reason of the taste and forethought of those who have administered the government of the city and who have planted various species of trees; so that you have different kinds of sylvan views. When you want a fine, bold effect, what could be grander than 16th street, with its incline rising steeply to the north, and the hills of Virginia as the background, where it falls gently away to the south? There are few finer streets in any city.

POTOMAC RIVER

"And silver white the river gleams."—H. W. Longfellow.

I do not mean to say that there are not many other capitals in this world to which Nature has been even more generous. You have not a beautiful arm of the sea at your doors, as has Constantinople, nor the magnificent mountains that surround the capitals of Rio Janeiro, or Santiago de Chile, nor such a bay, or rather land-locked gulf, as that of San Francisco, with its splendid passage out to the ocean; but those are very rare things, of which there are few in the world. As capitals go, few, indeed, are so advantageously situated in respect to natural charms as is Washington.

All these considerations make one feel how great are the opportunities here offered to you for the further adornment and beautification of this city. Nature has done so much, and you have, yourselves, already done so much that you are called upon to do more. You have such a chance offered to you here for building up a superb capital that it would be almost an act of ingratitude to Providence and to history and to the men who planted the city here if you did not use the advantages that you here enjoy. (Applause.)

Perhaps you might like to hear a few remarks on some of the other great capitals of the world. Take Berlin. It stands in a sandy waste, perfectly flat, with here and there a swampy pond or lake, and a sluggish stream meanders through it. Parts of the environs have, however, been well planted with trees, and this redeems the city to some extent. The streets are now stately, adorned by many a noble building. It has become, through the efforts of the government and its own citizens, an imposing city; but the environs can never be beautiful, because Nature has been very ungracious.

Take St. Petersburg. St. Petersburg has a splendid water front facing its grand river, the Neva, with its vast rush of cold

"There is an endless variety of foot-paths, each with its own vistas of woodland beauty."—Bryce.

green water, covered with ice in winter and chilling the air, and seeming to chill the landscape in summer. That, however, is the only beauty St. Petersburg has. The country is flat and in many places water-logged, owing to numerous pools and swamps. It has no natural attraction either in its immediate or more distant environs, except the stream of Neva.

Paris, again, has some agreeable landscapes within reach, but nothing at all striking, nothing nearly so fine in the lines of its scenery as the hills that inclose the valley in which Washington lies, and no such charm of a still wild forest as Washington affords. The Seine, too, is a stream not to be compared to your Potomac.

The same thing may be said of Madrid. It stands on a level, and the mountains are too distant to come effectively into the landscape, and its only water is a wretched little brooklet called the Manzanares. They tell a story there about a remark attributed to Alexandre Dumas when he visited Madrid. He was taken to the lofty bridge which spans the ravine at the bottom of which the rivulet flows. The day was hot and, being thirsty, he asked for a glass of water. They brought him the water, and he was about to drink, when looking down and catching sight of the streamlet, he said, "No, take it away; give it to that poor river; it needs a drink more than I do."

Then there is our English London, which stands in a rather tame country. It is true that there are some charming bits of quiet and pretty rural scenery in Surrey and Sussex, within a distance of from 20 to 30 miles, and there are pleasing beech woods covering the chalky hills of Bucks. Yet Nature has done nothing for London comparable to what she has done for Washington. The Thames, although it fills up pretty well at high

"Who cares whither a foot-path leads? The charm is in the foot-path itself, its promise of something that the high-road cannot yield."

—Thomas W. Higginson.

tide, is nowise comparable for volume or beauty of surroundings to your own Potomac.

These cities I have named have, however, something that you have not and cannot have for many a year to come. They are—and this applies especially to London and Paris—ancient cities. They have still, in spite of the destroying march of modern improvements, a certain number of picturesque buildings, crooked old streets, stately churches, and spots hallowed by the names of famous men who were born there or died there or did their work there. You are still in the early days of your history and are only beginning to accumulate historic memories which in four or five centuries will be rich and charged with meaning like those of European cities.

But in every other respect you have in Washington advan-

"Green winding walks and shady pathways sweet."—Charles Lamb.

ROCK CREEK PARK

tages which these European cities do not possess. If you want to make any large street improvement in London or Paris it is a most costly business. The land is very dear. You cannot easily disturb the old lines of streets and the drains and water pipes and telephone lines that lie under them. Every improvement that has to be made in a city like London has to be made at a cost so heavy that where it is added to the necessary expenses of maintaining modern appliances and carrying out sanitary regulations in an old city the cost is almost prohibitory. But here you have still plenty of space, and though the city is extending very fast on almost all sides, still, if you take forethought and consider your future, you can lay out the tracts over which Washington is beginning to spread in a way that will have results far more beautiful than are attainable in the

growing parts of London and Paris, where land is so expensive. London and Berlin and Paris are crowded and you are not yet crowded. You have still elbow room here to do what you want.

You possess another great advantage in not being a large commercial or manufacturing city. If you had manufactures you would have tall chimneys and, as it seems impossible to enforce an anti-smoke law in a manufacturing city, you would have black smoke, which would spoil the appearance of your finer buildings, especially those constructed of limestone or sandstone, the soot clinging to them as it does now to Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral in London. You would not have the same satisfaction in making things beautiful. A murky cloud would hang thick and dark over your city as it does over Pittsburgh and Chicago. Moreover, your streets would be overcrowded and difficulties of rapid transit would arise. With a much larger population, ideas of beauty would have to give way to those of commercial interests, whereas here the pressure of commerce is not such as to interfere with your ideals of beauty and convenience.

With all these advantages before you in Washington, and with the bottomless purse of Uncle Sam behind you—I am coming presently to the use that Uncle Sam's representatives may make of his purse for your benefit, but in the meantime we may assume it is an inexhaustible purse, because we know how much money he is able to spend upon objects that are certainly of no more importance than the beautification of Washington—with all those advantages ready to your hand, what may you not make of Washington? What may you not make of a city which is dedicated entirely to politics and government and society?

"The wild delight of woodland ways."—John G. Whittier.

Mr. Henry James, in one of his interesting and subtle studies of modern American life, called Washington the City of Conversation. That is a happy characterization, having regard not only to Congress and politics, but also to all the interesting talk that goes on here about science in the Cosmos Club, and elsewhere about many things that are neither scientific nor concerned with any kind of work. Washington is in a peculiar sense consecrated to society and to the lighter charms of life; in fact, to all these things which make the delight of human intercourse; and therefore it is especially fitting that it should be able to live without the continual intrusion of those mighty factors of modern life—industrial production and commercial exchange—which dominate most of the cities of this continent and indeed most of the great cities of the modern world. From all that in Washington you are free, and it is fortunate you are free, because you are able to make a city of a different kind, a city of a novel type, a city to which there will be nothing like in this country and hardly anything like in any other country.

It was, we shall all agree, an act of wisdom on the part of the founders of the Republic when they determined to plant its capital in a place where there was not already a city and where there was no great likelihood that either commerce or industry conducted on a great scale would arise. It is true that one of the reasons assigned for choosing this spot was that here was the head of navigation on the Potomac, and that the spot would be a good commercial center for supplying the back country. Fortunately, that has not turned out to be so. The trade of Washington is not, and is not likely to be, a disturbing element.

It was wise to have the Capital City, the seat of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the government,

"I know of no city in which the trees seem to be so much a part of the city as Washington."—Bryce.

NEW HAMPSHIRE AVENUE
"Where a woven roof keeps the prying sun aloof."—E. C. Stedman.

removed from the influences of an immense population. You are a great deal better here for the purposes of conducting your politics in a calm and deliberate, a thoughtful and a philosophic spirit than if you were in New York, Philadelphia, or Chicago. Your city, it is true, is large and growing larger, but it is not likely to be the home of any vast, excitable, industrial population such as is growing up in these other cities. It is not receiving those crowds of immigrants which are making New York, Chicago, and, to a less extent, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Milwaukee and St. Louis almost as much foreign as American.

In these circumstances, may not the city of Washington feel that its mission in life is to be the embodiment of the majesty and the stateliness of the whole nation; to be, as was well said by the previous speaker, a capital of capitals, a capital

of the whole nation, overtopping the capitals of the several States as much as the nation overtops those States, representing all that is finest in American conception, all that is largest and most luminous in American thought, embodying the nation's ideal of what the capital of such a nation should be. This it should accomplish partly by the stateliness and number and local disposition of its edifices; but above all by their beauty. What one desires is that this Capital City should represent the highest aspirations as to external dignity and beauty that a great people can form for that which is the center and focus of their national life, and there is in the effort to do this here nothing to disparage the greatness of other American cities which have much larger populations and larger pecuniary resources.

Paris is the most striking instance in the modern world of

THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION BUILDING

a capital that has exercised a powerful influence on a great country. Some have thought its influence was too great, for it used to be the home not only of art, but also of revolution. Paris sometimes assumed for all France the right of saying what form of government France should have and who should hold the reins of power; but notwithstanding that, we must not ignore the great things Paris has done for France. In polishing the language, in forming a brilliant type of social life, and in being the center of the literary and artistic culture which has been radiated out over the whole country, Paris has done wonders. But an even more striking instance of what a city can do is to be found in the ancient world; it is the instance of Athens. You all remember that wonderful speech in which the greatest of Athenian statesmen described what his city did for Greece, not only for the narrow territory of Attica, but for the whole of Greece. He showed how his city had made itself the finest embodiment of the Hellenic spirit. The highest creative talent in literature and art was concentrated in that one spot, where every intellectual influence played upon and refined every other; and as Athens represented the finest embodiment of ancient culture, so you would like Washington to represent your American ideals. You would like it to give by its external splendor a sort of esthetic education to the people. You would like it to be a model of other cities, a model which the capitals of the greater States may all seek to vie with, as most of these States have already imitated, in the construction of their State capitols, the Capitol at Washington. What you want is to have a city which every one who comes from Maine, Texas, Florida, Arkansas, or Oregon can admire as being something finer and more beautiful than he had ever dreamed of before; something which makes him even more proud to be an American; some-

MAINE AVENUE

thing which makes him wish to diffuse the same ideas of beauty through his own State as he sees set forth in visible form here. (Applause.)

You wish to have not only beautiful buildings, but you want to have everything else that makes the externals of life attractive and charming. You wish to have picture galleries. You wish to have museums. You have made advances in that direction already, for you have an admirable and constantly growing National Museum. You have the beginnings of a fine art gallery, and will doubtless add to it a national portrait gallery. You have admirable scientific institutions of many kinds, some of which will ultimately be housed in buildings finer than they have yet obtained. Some of the administrative departments of the government, especially the scientific depart-

THE OCTAGON HOUSE

VIRGINIA AVENUE

ments, are organized on a scale such as can hardly be found elsewhere.

You need something more in the way of public halls; perhaps one or two more could well be used besides those you possess. But you have some splendid new buildings; for instance, the new railway station, with its two long and noble halls, that yields only to the magnificence of the new Pennsylvania station in New York.

You have also the Pan American Building. That seems

to me to be one of the most finished and graceful, one of the most happily conceived and skilfully executed buildings that has been erected anywhere within the last 30 or 40 years.

Let me add that there is one thing that is still wanting. There ought to be a great National American University in Washington. Through no fault either of the professors or of our friend, Admiral Stockton, who presides with so much wise care over the George Washington University here, that institution has not received those funds and those buildings which are needed to make it worthy of the name it bears. This is rather a digression, but I would like to say, as I have mentioned the university, that the suggestion that a great central university is needed does not by any means imply that such an institution should be managed by the nation through Congress, or should necessarily even receive from Congress the funds needed for its support. But you will all agree that a national capital ought to have a great university. It need not be of the same type as the great State universities, nor set itself to do all the things that are done in universities located in or near great cities. You have, for instance, no great industrial establishments here calling for a faculty of engineering or of other practical arts on such a scale as those universities must have, placed as they are, in great commercial centers. What seems most directly needed is a university dedicated to three kinds of study—to theoretic science, to the arts and the artistic side of life, and to what are called the "human studies" of a philological, historical, and political order. There is of course no reason why you should limit your aspirations; but the more immediate need in this city is not for an institution fitting men to enter upon any kind of technical work in manufacturing or mining or agricultural industry, but for something of a different type. You ought to

THE SUMNER ELM—CAPITOL GROUNDS

have a fully equipped school of law, a complete and well staffed school of political science and of economics, and therewith, also, a strong school of history. You have already in your government departments an unusually large number of eminent, industrious, and distinguished scientific men, who are one of the glories of Washington, and to match these you must also have a like galaxy of men pursuing those studies, such as history, economics, philology, and law, which are the complement of scientific studies. Through the liberality of private benefactors, with perhaps some aid from the national government, it will surely be found possible before long to carry out the great idea which the first President had when he urged that a university should be established in this city, which was the darling thought and hope of his old age. (Applause.)

I have been invited by some of you to make a few sugges-

CHESTNUT TREES NEAR THE MONUMENT

tions as to some of the things that may be considered with a view to the beautification of Washington and the turning of its natural advantages to the best account.

It is hardly necessary to observe that there ought to be some method of securing a measure of symmetry and harmony in buildings. The public buildings to be erected should not be planted haphazard. Each building ought to be placed with some reference to the others, so that they will form, if possible, a group together, and all go to make up a good general effect.

In the same way, when laying out the streets, it is proper to consider the lines on which the streets may best be planned, so as to give the best scenic effect and so as to open up the best vistas. It is well to make some streets unusually wide, like 16th street, and to turn them in such a way that they shall give

"Where stillness and solitude reign."—William Cowper.

the best northwestern and western evening lights, and, if possible, a little piece of landscape effect at the end. Nothing is more charming than to see a bit of green landscape—trees, or a grassy slope—at the end of a long street vista. There are some streets in the growing parts of Washington where that can be usefully done.

I am far from suggesting that you should try to attain uniformity in your buildings, because uniformity usually ends in monotony. That can be seen in the buildings of Paris. When the city was largely rebuilt by Haussman in Louis Napoleon's day, that error was committed. While many of the boulevards of that time are very handsome, one gets tired of the repetition of the same designs and structure over and over again.

There is no doubt something almost grotesque in the manner in which private houses are placed side by side here

"Where the cow is, there is Arcadia."—John Burroughs.

"Where live nibbling sheep."—The Tempest, Act IV, Sc. 1.

in Washington—a large and handsome edifice, perhaps in the style of a French château, by the side of a mean little building of brick, or perhaps even of a wooden shack. A piece of castellated Romanesque in granite looks odd beside a colonial house in brick or stucco. Yet even this oddity is a better plan than the monotony of modern Paris or the far duller monotony of Harley street or Gower street in London.

In considering the beautifying of streets, something should be done to take into account the possibilities in the little open space triangles that you have here in Washington at the intersection of streets and avenues. They are very pleasant places in the summer because they are green; but surely more might be made in a decorative way of them. You need not perhaps put up any more statues, but treat these corners in some ornamental fashion, so as to give them a greater landscape value than they have at present.

Questions relating to the river and the Potomac Park constitute a very large subject. You have, since the low ground along the Potomac has been reclaimed, a magnificent open space, and you have running through it and spread out below it on both sides of the island a magnificent expanse of water that is perhaps the strongest feature in Washington itself for scenic purposes.

A great deal will depend in the way in which that open space is treated; I am not competent to criticise the plan of the Mall or the Lincoln Memorial, which has been so amply and interestingly dealt with by Mr. Glenn Brown.

Much thought ought to be given to the treatment of Potomac Park, on this side the river, and possibly to the ground on the other side also, if you ever gain power to control the other side, so as to produce the best scenic effects. I do not know

ROCK CREEK

"A broad stream foaming over its stony bed and wild leafy woods looking down on each side."—Bryce.

whether any of you have been in Calcutta, but if so you will remember the only fine feature of that rather uninteresting city is the broad river and the very large, open grassy park which is called the Meidan, which borders on it. The river Hooghly and the Meidan redeem Calcutta. This park is a sort of huge Meidan for Washington. Ought not pains to be taken to plant groups of trees, some large groups and more small groups, so as to give fine combinations? One day these will grow to the size of old forest trees and the effect will be impressive. We must take thought for even the distant future, for we are trustees in this way for posterity, and we want posterity to think well of us. Perhaps, too, a wild growth of small shrubs and herbaceous wild flowers might be encouraged over parts at least of the space, so as to make it as much as possible like a great natural park.

Then there is the question of Anacostia. Whenever you go to Anacostia you feel that an opportunity has so far been lost. That river or inlet, as one may call it, might be much more valuable for picturesque purposes than it is now. Part of it might be dammed up and reclaimed from the unlovely swamp that lies along the margin of the deeper water, and trees planted on the side, and something done to make it otherwise attractive, that it may be to southeastern Washington what the Potomac itself is to us at this end.

All along on the other side of the Anacostia river you have very many fine sites. The hill behind Anacostia on the southeast gives superb views. Some of the finest general prospects of Washington are to be had from those hills on the other side of the Anacostia river. Such sites ought to be treated so as to get the greatest effect from them, so that any one looking across from this side will have a pleasing view presented. Small,

VIEW FROM KLINGLE ROAD BRIDGE

"The broken stream flows on in silver light."—Robert Southey.

mean shacks or little groups of hovels ought to be kept off of fine sites. To care for these things ought not to be set down to personal fastidiousness. We are not to suppose that in thinking of the beauties of the city or country we are thinking of ourselves only, for beauty and ugliness have an effect upon the minds of all classes of residents. There are many places on the outskirts of this city which have become sordid and even hideous, owing to the habit of dumping refuse. It ought to be checked. I do not know what the powers of the District Commissioners are, but if they have not sufficient power to stop that defacement of nature they ought to be given such power. I suppose this refuse could be burned, and if so it certainly should be burned, or perhaps buried, so it would not offend those who walk around the city and see the beauties of our environs.

Take the whole of the valley of Rock Creek up as far as the Massachusetts Avenue bridge, and from that further up to the Connecticut Avenue bridge. Can there be anything more odious, and even loathsome, than the dumps on those slopes, which I can remember were even so lately as six years ago covered by picturesque trees and grass and wild shrubs?

A reference to the Potomac leads me to speak of the splendid ridge of rocks forming the face of the hills on the Virginia side. They have been sadly cut into by quarries, spoiling the natural beauty of the rocks; but nature will one day repair those blemishes. Perhaps she will not do so within the lifetime of most of us, but in the course of years, with rain and frost and vegetation, lichens, moss, and grass, Nature will soften the harshness of the rocks where the stone has been taken away, and you will again have picturesque cliffs along the banks of the Potomac, with the tall trees lifting their plumage into the sky behind. Those are very valuable elements in our Washington landscape.

I have three small suggestions to make, which I make with diffidence, because many of you have, no doubt, thought of the same matters and may have arrived at other conclusions.

One is that it is desirable if possible to stop any further quarrying on the Potomac cliffs and to preserve the trees on the top of those cliffs on the Virginia side, and to make a good path, a walking path or riding path, or possibly a not too obtrusive driving road, along the top, looking down onto the river, from which you could get fine prospects. The road might be kept a little back, so as not to be conspicuous from below.

A second suggestion is that on the north side of the Potomac it might be desirable to make a short driving road by

"Where the water splashes over ridges of rock and twists round huge boulders."—Bryce.

continuing the road in Georgetown from where the station of the electric traction line is, along to the point where you approach the water works, and where the road comes up from below to the water works on the Great Falls road. The hill there is very pretty, and it would be better if the ugly shacks that deface it in part were cleared away. A road there would give a better approach to the Reservoir road from Georgetown than that at the foot of the hill and would give a pleasing prospect over the river and beyond it to the woods on the Virginia side.

All the slope on this side of the river from that point up deserves careful treatment. There are many beautiful sites, and if the ground is cut up for rows of small, mean houses, and treated without any care, a good many possibilities of beauty will be lost. The land falls in pretty slopes, and if the

" There are places where the creek is deep and stagnant, with sandy pools."—Bryce.

wooded hills which run up from the river levels to the mass of woodland south and west of the buildings now called "The American University," on the Ridge road, to the pretty little parallel valleys that come down through these slopes, could be kept in their natural state, so much the better. If they cannot be kept in their natural state, at any rate let them be treated in such a way as not to destroy what scenic beauty there is on that side of the river.

A third remark may be added. Two good roads are much needed to run across from the line of the Tennallytown and Rockville road to the eastern Baltimore road which passes Bladensburg. One of these might run on the city side of the Soldiers' Home and the other about a mile farther out toward the District line. They might be well planted with trees, as

Massachusetts avenue now is, and make pretty as well as serviceable boulevards covering a large arc of the circle of the city.

That leads me to observe that it is becoming important to preserve the few best general views over Washington. Perhaps the finest of all is from Arlington. Those who know the Ridge road, already referred to, and the so-called American University know the road that comes down as a prolongation of the Ridge road all the way to behind the west end of Georgetown, northwest of the Georgetown University. There are several charming points of view on that road toward its southern end, points from which you see over the city and 15 or 20 miles or more into Maryland and Virginia. These are among the most beautiful views around Washington, and it would be very easy to spoil those views by putting up rows of houses which would make it impossible to see them from the road.

May I mention another point of view that is now threatened and perhaps almost gone? You all know the spot at which Wisconsin avenue (up which the cars run to Tennallytown and the District line) intersects Massachusetts avenue, which has now been extended beyond that intersection into the country. At that point of intersection, just opposite where the Episcopal Cathedral is to stand, there is one spot commanding what is one of the most beautiful general views of Washington. You look down upon the city, you see its most striking buildings—the Capitol, the Library, State, War, and Navy Department, and the Post-Office and other high buildings along Pennsylvania avenue—and beyond them you see the great silvery flood of the Potomac and the soft lines fading away in dim outline in the far southeast. It is a delightful and inspiring view. It is a view that reminds one of some of those ample prospects over Rome which the traveler is able to obtain from

THE BRIDGE ON THE MILITARY ROAD

St. Peter Montorio, on the Tuscan side of the Tiber, or from Monte Mario.

All that piece of land is being now cut up, and according to present appearances houses will be built there immediately, and after two years nobody will ever see that view again except from the tower of the cathedral when erected. Can it be saved?

There may be other views of Washington that are as good, but there is none better. It is a view that speaks not only to the eye, but to the imagination also. The top of the slope ought to have been turned into a public park, and the houses below kept at such a height that if they were to be built they would not obstruct the view from above.

Of course it is to be regretted that all of that piece of land on both sides of Massachusetts avenue and especially the part between Massachusetts and Connecticut avenues, was not kept for the Washington of the future. It is one of the saddest things we have seen, the way in which that beautiful bit of woodland country between Massachusetts avenue and Connecticut avenue, where some of us used to take our favorite recreation under the leafy boughs, listening to the songs of the birds in spring and to the murmuring of the little brooks that purled down the hollows, to know that this tract has now been leveled, the tiny glens filled up and the brooks turned into subterranean drains. It will soon be covered with villas or rows of dwellings, and 30 years hence no one will know how charming that side of Washington was.

From these vain regrets let me turn to say something more about Rock Creek, where there is still time to save beauties that are threatened. To Rock Creek there is nothing comparable in any capital city of Europe. What city in the world is there

"ROSEDALE," BUILT IN 1746

THE "HIGHLANDS," WISCONSIN AVENUE

where a man living in a house like that in which we are meeting, in 18th street, can within less than 10 minutes by car and within a quarter of an hour on his own feet get into a beautiful rocky glen, such as you would find in the woods of Maine or Scotland —a winding, rocky glen, with a broad stream foaming over its stony bed and wild leafy woods looking down on each side, where you not only have a carriage road at the bottom, but an inexhaustible variety of footpaths, where you can force your way through thickets and test your physical ability in climbing up and down steep slopes, and in places scaling the faces of bold cliffs, all that you have in Rock Creek Park. And yet I am told that a good deal of the land behind Rock Creek Park is being sold for building purposes. The beauty of a portion of the park has already been spoiled at the place where the

Mt. Pleasant road goes down into the park toward Pierce's Mill, by the erection of a row of not too beautiful houses. A great deal of the land which lies northwest of Rock Creek Park, toward Connecticut avenue, does not belong to the District, I understand.

Yet it is quite essential to the beauty of Rock Creek Park that that tract of charming woodland should not be built upon. The builder has been stealing steadily forward to the edge of the park. Before long much of this tract will be covered with buildings. There is still time to stop that. There is still time to see that all that is not yet touched by buildings—at least that land between Connecticut avenue and Rock Creek, on the one side, and between Rock Creek and the continuation of Georgia avenue, toward Silver Spring, on the other—and, above

"MONTPELIER," IN THE MARYLAND SUBURBS

ON THE OLD RIVER ROAD

all, to see to it that the valley of the creek itself, which is now thickly wooded, shall be kept forever as a part of the Rock Creek Park.

I should like to go even further—although perhaps I am indulging in aspirations and not sufficiently thinking of appropriations—and consecrate the whole of Rock Creek valley for 10 or 12 miles above Washington to the public. It is a very beautiful valley. If you will take the Chevy Chase car until it crosses Rock Creek and then follow the creek up toward the west for a few miles, and then turn back to the car line aforesaid and follow the creek down the whole way till you strike the Military road, below Fort Stevens, you will pass through a variety of river and woodland scenery which it is extraordinary to find so close to a great city. Along one part of the stream

"CLEAN DRINKING MANOR," BUILT IN 1750

there are places where the creek is deep and stagnant, with sandy pools; at other places the water runs swiftly, and there are ripples in the stream and many tiny cascades, where the water splashes over ridges of rock and twists round huge boulders. You will find an endless variety of beauty. Some day or other such a piece of scenery will be of infinite value to the people of Washington, who want to refresh their souls with the charms of Nature. All along the creek they will see a great many water-loving birds—kingfishers and ousels and others too numerous to mention. All along the slopes and in the meadows by the stream they can find a great many beautiful wild flowers. I have found some quite uncommon and most lovely wild flowers growing there in the spring. There are leafy glades where a man can go and lie down on a bed of leaves

ON THE CONDUIT ROAD

and listen for hours to the birds singing and forget there is such a place as Washington and such a thing as politics within eight miles of him.

These things you have now still left, though daily threatened, and what a pity it would be to lose them! At this moment the value of the outlying land I have referred to would not be very high. A good deal of it is not very suitable for buildings. A good deal of it is not used to any extent for agriculture.

While on that subject I would like to refer to still another matter which has been mooted by those who are interested in public parks. It has found some favor in Baltimore and deserves to find favor here. That is the creation of a large forest reserve between Washington and Baltimore, within, say, 25

IN ROCK CREEK PARK

miles of this city. There are lovely pieces of woodland on the Maryland side of the Potomac, behind Cabin John Bridge and above Cabin John, running along toward the neighborhood of Rockville. There is not much heavy timber, so the woods, though very pretty, cannot be of much pecuniary value. The land is not very valuable for agricultural purposes, or it would have been turned into cultivation. So far as appears, nothing has been done or is being done with the land to make much profit out of it. There are many other pieces of woodland of great beauty farther to the northeast and east. Most if not all of those woods could be bought at moderate prices. They could be managed so as to bring in a revenue which would with good forestry methods perhaps return a profit, or at any rate pay the cost of administration. What a thing it would be

for the people of Baltimore and Washington to have an immense open space like that, where they could go out on Saturdays and Sundays, especially in the summer months; where they could wander about, have their picnic parties, and enjoy these pleasures of nature, which are the simplest and purest that God has bestowed upon his creatures the capacity of enjoying.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, you may say this is all very fine and pretty, but where are the funds to come from? Well, considering that the District of Columbia is Uncle Sam's property, and that his purse is a deep one, and that a wide-open region for recreation will become more and more valuable, and the obtaining it more and more costly as time goes on, what you have got to do is to educate public opinion and induce Congress to spend a moderate sum for this purpose, while the people of Baltimore induce their city and the State of Maryland to do the like. No people is really more idealistic than the American people, and if you once get hold of their imagination and appeal to their sense of the ideal, they will respond.

You probably remember the old tale—I will not call it a threadbare story, but a time-honored story—of the sibyl who came to King Tarquin with nine books of prophecies to sell, and how when she named their price the king said it was too much. She went away and burned three of the books and came back, and still the king said the price was too much, and she went away and burned three more and came back with only three books and asked him to buy those, and then the king perceived there was more in the matter than he had supposed and gave her the price for the three that she had originally asked for the nine and regretted that the other six had been destroyed. Those three contained predictions and warnings which made the greatness of Rome. Who can tell how much

BROOK NEAR CHAIN BRIDGE

longer the Roman Empire would have lasted if Tarquin had bought the whole nine.

So some day the people are going to set the true value upon all these things—these spots of beauty around Washington and all the tract behind the Rock Creek valley and these woodlands I have spoken of. When that day comes one of two things will happen: Those who come after you will either have to pay far more for these pieces of ground than would have to be paid now, or else men will mourn in vain over opportunities of enjoyment forever lost. This is the favorable moment. The value of land near this great and growing city is rising every day. If you can but convince those who hold the purse-strings, it will be good business to buy now and dedicate to the public for all time to come.

"Woodsy and wild and lonesome."—J. G. Whittier.

The trouble has been with you that you have not been sufficiently hopeful in those past years during which wealth and population were growing all through the 19th century. It may seem strange to say so to an American audience, because you are supposed, and rightly, to be the most sanguine of peoples. Nevertheless, you have never sufficiently foreseen how enormously rich and populous a nation you are going to be.

I read lately a book in which an European traveller described the site of Washington as it was in 1795. He said it consisted of woods, through which he could not find his way from the village of Georgetown to the spot where now stands the Capitol. Just think what has been done since that time! Look at the pace at which your city has been growing. Within the last six years it seems to me it has extended itself half a mile further into the country in every direction, covering what were then fields and woods with streets and squares.

As the result of the amazing growth of the United States you are going to have an enormous capital, even if it has no large industries. We made the mistake in London of not foreseeing how London would grow. When we began 80 years ago to build railway stations we made little tiny stations, not realizing that the country and with it London were going to grow enormously, and that far more space would be needed for our increased traffic. It seems strange now that every man of sense did not foresee this growth and the need for preparing to meet it.

People ought to have realized 80 years ago what the progress of modern science was certain to achieve, what railroads were going to become, what larger facilities for transportation were sure to be required, how coal and steam power were going to increase wealth and industry, and how population

"Murmuring through pleasant nooks."—J. R. Lowell.

would multiply. Whether any European countries will continue to grow as fast in the future as Britain and Germany have grown during the past 80 years, I will not venture to conjecture; but about the continuing increase of wealth and population here in the United States there can be no doubt at all.

That increase seems destined to continue here for at least a century and a half or two centuries to come, and at the end of that time no one can tell what your population may have become. That is the reason why you should think about these things now and make your preparations for the future. The only man who seems to have foreseen the greatness of this city, so far as I can learn, was George Washington himself. Although he died before Louisiana was purchased and long before you acquired territory on the Pacific coast, he appears to

"He who marvels at the beauty of the world in summer will find equal cause for admiration in winter."
—John Burroughs.

have realized that this was going to be an enormous country and ought to have a grand capital, and you ought to go back to his ideals and render the greatest tribute you can render to his immortal memory.

What you have got to do is to make the nation feel that it has a real living interest in Washington. Make the man from Maine and from Minnesota and from Florida feel that Washington belongs to him. It is not those only who live here in Washington that are the owners of Washington, but these men also who dwell all over the country. Many of them, and all their representatives, come here every year, and as they are proud of the nation they ought also to feel proud of their nation's capital.

That may seem a large task for you to undertake, but you will address yourselves to it, and I cannot doubt that you will succeed, and I wish I could hope to be still here to witness your success.

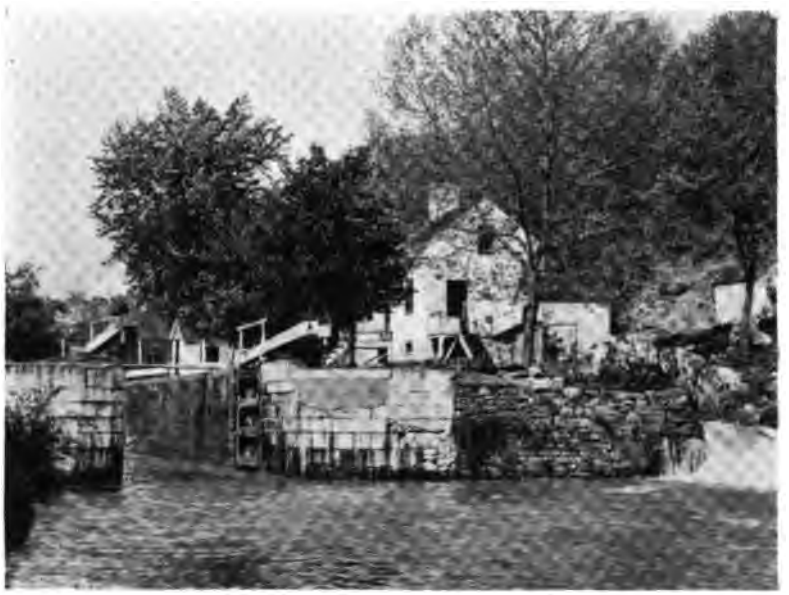
Having lived in this city among you with so much happiness and enjoyment during the past six years, it is with deep regret that my wife and I are now preparing to depart from you. But, remembering the unceasing and unvarying kindness we have received from all of you here in Washington, we shall recall those six years with constant pleasure, continuing to cherish the recollection of our Washington friends, and our hopes and wishes will always be with those who are striving to make Washington beautiful, and a capital worthy of the majesty of this mighty nation.

"I wonder if the snow loves the trees and fields, that it kisses them so gently."—Lewis Carroll

LYON'S MILL VALLEY

CANAL LOCK AT GREAT FALLS

COMMITTEE OF ONE HUNDRED ON THE
FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF
WASHINGTON



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"A pleasant nook in a pleasant land."—R. W. Emerson.

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